

REPORT

ON THE

SANITARY CONDITION

OF

THE BOROUGH OF DEVIZES,

BY

E. N. CARLESS,

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.



DEVIZES :

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REPORT.

BOROUGH OF DEVIZES,
HEALTH DEPARTMENT.

*To the TOWN COUNCIL OF DEVIZES,
acting as the Urban Sanitary Authority.*

GENTLEMEN,

In compliance with the order of the Local Government Board, I have the honour to present the annual report upon the Health and Sanitary condition of the Borough for the year ending the 31st December, 1893, together with the year's Report of the Hospital for Infectious Diseases. It is satisfactory to be able to point to a lower death rate in the town than that recorded for the two previous years, and I venture to express the hope that the continued vigilance of the Town Council over matters directly connected with the sanitary condition of the town will tend to an improved vitality

amongst the population, as well as a decrease in the death-rate. I cannot refrain from expressing regret that the Town Council have not yet seen their way to make such alterations at the Hospital for infectious diseases as would provide accommodation for two kinds of infectious diseases for the two sexes.

I have the honour to remain,

Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

E. NICOLLS CARLESS,

Medical Officer Health.

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**GENERAL SANITARY CONDITION  
OF THE DISTRICT.  
POPULATION.**

The Population of the Borough taken at the last Census (1891) was 6,426.

| POPULATION.                 | 1891. | 1881. | 1871. |
|-----------------------------|-------|-------|-------|
| ST. JOHN'S PARISH           | 1866  | 1940  | 2039  |
| ST. MARY'S    "    "        | 2392  | 2605  | 2700  |
| ST. JAMES'    }    " Within | 1850  | 1779  | 1746  |
| ROWDE         }    the      | 318   | 321   | 354   |
|                             |       |       |       |
|                             |       |       |       |

### AREA.

The area is 917 acres, the number of persons per acre 7, and the number of persons per inhabited house about 4.

### PHYSICAL AND GEOLOGICAL FEATURES OF THE DISTRICT.

The town stands upon the top of a hill, the surface of which is flattened out into a sort of table land, and is about 500 feet above the level of the sea. 420 ft

The nature of the soil is the upper green sand; one of the beds lying between the chalk and the oolites.

### WATER SUPPLY.

The source of the water supply is from a well 190 feet deep, sunk in the basin on the Downs at Beckhampton, the water-shed being the range of high land between Shepherd Shore and Marlborough.

The character of the water will be seen by the following analyses.

The amount used per head per diem of the population supplied is about 17 gallons. The supply, since the water-works have been established, about 15 years, has been *constant*, with the exception of a brief interval recently, when alterations were being carried out at the well, and the water was turned off at night.



## COPY OF ANALYSES OF TOWN WATER.

| Date.     | Sample of water taken.       | Grains per gallon. |           |                   |                                          |                       | Parts per Million. |                  |
|-----------|------------------------------|--------------------|-----------|-------------------|------------------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|------------------|
|           |                              | Total Solids.      | Chlorine. | Sulphate of Lime. | Oxygen taken from permanganate in 15 mm. | Nitrogen as Nitrates. | Free Ammonia.      | Organic Ammonia. |
| 26th Feb. | (A)<br>From Well at Shepherd |                    |           |                   |                                          |                       |                    |                  |
|           | Shore ... ..                 | 19.6               | 0.75      | Trace             | 0.010                                    | 0.51                  | 0.045              | —                |
| „         | (B)<br>From Market Place,    |                    |           |                   |                                          |                       |                    |                  |
|           | Devizes ... ..               | 19.7               | 0.75      | „                 | 0.010                                    | 0.50                  | 0.11               | —                |
| 17th Feb. | (C)<br>From Long Street ...  | 19.04              | 0.64      | „                 | 0.025                                    | 0.4                   | 0.09               | 0.03             |

In each Sample there was a trace of Sulphates ; Nitrates, none ; and Phosphates a faint trace. Condition clear, Odour none, Colour good.

“The Free Ammonia noticeable in the three Samples is of no significance, because it is rather the rule than the exception in water from deep wells in chalk.”

(Signed) JOHN M. H. MUNRO, D.Sc.,  
Salisbury.

### SYSTEM OF SEWERAGE.

There is a deep system of drainage in the town, the chief portion being on the south side of the Canal. Five main sewers, starting from their highest points, pass through various

streets, and converge to two points. One point (A) being at the junction of Northgate Street and the Market Place—from here the sewer is carried onward, passing under the G.W. Railway at the north end of the tunnel through a field beyond, where a junction is formed with the other portion (B), which leaves Long Street at a point opposite Morris's Lane, passing under the G.W. Railway at the south end of the tunnel, and through the orchard below Devizes Castle—here the two outfalls converge and are carried to the Sewage Works.

On the north side of the Canal the sewer commences at Avon Terrace, passing along the Bath Road towards the Prison. After passing through settling tanks the sewage is distributed into ditches in the fields beyond. At the present time plans are under consideration for pumping the sewage from this part of the town to the Sewage Works.

Seven flushing tanks and six ventilating shafts are connected with the main sewer.

### **SEWAGE WORKS.**

These works were erected several years ago, but have been added to and very much improved upon during the last year or two.

The works consists of five large settling tanks into which the sewage is turned, each

settling tank being used in succession. At the inlet the sewage is treated with Ferozone, passing at once into one of the settling tanks, where it remains for six hours. After settling, the top water is run on to the filter-beds, and from there conducted along a channel to be distributed over grass lands. Inside the building various machinery is used for mixing the sludge and lime, forcing it up into presses and compressing it into the form of cakes, which are sold for manure.

### **WATER CLOSETS.**

Water closets are general throughout the town, and no closets are knowingly permitted to remain connected with the sewers without a supply of water being provided for effectually flushing the closet and drain. Cisterns of the water-waste preventing class are those invariably used, except at some schools or public institutions where wash-out troughs are permitted.

### **PRIVIES, ASHPITS, REFUSE COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL AND SYSTEM OF SCAVENGING.**

Privies are buildings of the past—they are not known to exist.

Ashpits are in some instances in use, but the practice of placing house refuse early in the morning in movable receptacles, before the



fronts of the houses for removal by the Urban Sanitary Authority's carts is, I am pleased to say, generally adopted. In some few instances ashpits still exist in the rear of private houses, and in one or two Courts. The supervision exercised prevents any accumulation taking place.

### **THE DISPOSAL OF REFUSE.**

As great difficulty has been experienced for years past in satisfactorily disposing of the town refuse, the Sanitary Authority, at considerable expense, this year rented a small farm on the outskirts of the east-end of the town, and erected two Furnaces for the destruction of rubbish. The ashes are screened and sold for manure. Although this method of getting rid of offensive matter, instead of allowing it to remain in immense heaps at the outskirts of the town, has been attended with expense, a sense of relief must be experienced in knowing that the complete destruction of the noxious materials will at least prevent organisms generated by decomposing animal and vegetable matter, from this source, being disseminated through the atmosphere to the great risk of the inhabitants of the town and neighbourhood.

### **SYSTEM OF SCAVENGING.**

This is carried out by men in the employ of the Sanitary Authority.

## **CONDITION OF THE HOUSES OF THE WORKING CLASSES.**

These compare favourably with other country towns. The houses are chiefly brick-built, with slate or tile roofs. Although many of the houses or cottages are old, they are in very good repair, and there is an absence of back-to-back houses, as well as an entire absence of cellar dwellings. There is one Common Lodging-house only. Cottage property being plentiful cases of over-crowding are rare. During the past twenty years many of the older or more dilapidated cottages have been condemned.

The Industries engaged in are limited, the chief being engineers and agricultural implement makers. The health of the workpeople does not appear to be injuriously affected by their occupations.

## **STREAMS.**

The only stream is the Kennet and Avon Canal, which passes through the town dividing one-third at the north-end from the other two-thirds. Up to a recent date drains from property abutting the banks were discharged into the stream, but steps have been successfully taken to prevent this pollution.

## **BURIAL GROUND.**

The old Burial Grounds adjoining the

various places of worship within the borough have been practically closed since the construction of a Cemetery for the four parishes.

### **SLAUGHTER-HOUSES.**

There are seven in number—in three only is slaughtering to any great extent carried out. They are usually in a fairly clean condition, but the situation of one and all is undesirable. In all they adjoin the business premises and are, more or less, surrounded by houses. A public abattoir is desirable. They are visited by the Inspector and reported upon regularly.

### **BAKE-HOUSES.**

Like the slaughter-houses these are visited regularly but not so frequently. They are, in most instances, usually found to be clean.

### **WORKSHOPS.**

Those visited have been found clean, fairly well ventilated and not overcrowded.

### **DAIRIES AND COWSHEDS.**

The Dairies, especially the two larger ones carried on by two Companies, are well constructed, clean and roomy. The older or smaller ones <sup>are</sup> or not so suitable for the purpose, but still they are clean and the bye-laws are generally observed by the owners.

Cowsheds do not really exist in the town

proper, but at the outskirts. These are by no means model cowsheds, but on the whole they are clean and well ventilated.

### **BYE-LAWS ADOPTED.**

The Town Council adopted "The Private Streets Works Act, 1892," which came into operation on the 1st November.

Bye-laws have been adopted from time to time by the Authority in pursuance of powers given by the "Public Health Act, 1875, and Acts incorporated therewith."

"The Dairies, Cow Sheds and Milk Shop Order, 1885," was also adopted by the Authority, and came into force in October, 1888.

The Bye-laws have usually been found to meet the requirements of the district and, I believe I may add, are strictly enforced.

### **PERIODIC INSPECTION OF DISTRICT.**

The Town has been systematically inspected twice during the year, and portions of it at intervals.

In all instances where the houses are not separate or distinct, the premises in the rear are thoroughly inspected as regards drainage and W.C. accommodation, and where houses are believed to be in a dilapidated or unwholesome condition the insides of the houses are inspected.



Enquiries are also made as to the number of persons inhabiting them with a view to prevent over-crowding. One house was found unfit for human habitation.

### SUMMARY OF NUISANCES.

|                                                                 |        |    |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|--------|----|
| Nuisances requiring structural alterations in drains or closets | ...    | 5  |
| W.C.'s without a supply, or insufficient supply of water        | ... .. | 9  |
| W.C.'s or drains in unsanitary condition                        | ... .. | 14 |
| Unwholesome condition of houses                                 | ...    | 1  |
| Unwholesome condition of bake-houses                            |        | 1  |
| Unwholesome condition of slaughter-houses                       | ... .. | 1  |
| Houses unfit for human habitation                               | ...    | 1  |
| „ „ over-crowded                                                | ...    | —  |
| Unregistered slaughter-houses used                              | ...    | 1  |
| Animals kept so as to be nuisances                              | ...    | 2  |
| Other nuisances                                                 | ... .. | 14 |

41

### SANITARY IMPROVEMENTS EFFECTED DURING THE YEAR.

The Well at the source of the Town Water Supply was deepened to the extent of 50 feet by making a 12-inch bore hole. The depth of the Well is now 190 feet.

A Refuse Destructor was erected.



## ACTION TAKEN TO PREVENT THE SPREAD OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Cases of infectious disease, as far as Hospital accommodation will allow are treated at the Fever Hospital.

The rooms from which Patients are removed are disinfected, free of cost, by a man employed by the Sanitary Authority.

Persons suffering from measles are not admitted to the Hospital. Indeed, no other than *one disease* can be treated at the same time.

Where persons are not removed to the Hospital, printed directions are sent to the occupiers of the houses in which the sick persons reside directing them as to the means they should adopt to prevent the spread of disease; also pointing out that houses or rooms and bedding, &c., are disinfected, free of cost, if the occupiers of the houses desire it. At the same time the parents of infected children are instructed not to send other members of the family to school. A notice is now also sent to the Head-master or Head-mistress of a public school notifying that the child or scholar lately attending the school is suffering from an infectious disease.

Schools have not recently been closed by the ~~Directors~~ of the Sanitary Authority in con-  
*direction*

sequence of any Infectious Disease prevailing. Twenty-one houses or rooms were disinfected by the Sanitary Authority.

### **HOSPITAL FOR INFECTIOUS DISEASES.**

This is an Iron building with brick foundation, and tiled roof. The walls are lined with matchwood, and the whole of the inside is whitewashed. There are two wards, containing seven beds in each ward. Between the wards is a room for a Nurse, a bath-room, and a scullery. In each ward, built out from it, is a spacious W.C.

The Administrative Block is brick-built, and contains five rooms and a kitchen.

This Block is separated from the Hospital by a covered corridor.

The whole is drained into the Borough sewers, and has a supply of water from the Town mains. Both buildings are lighted by gas.

### **DISINFECTING CHAMBER.**

In the grounds adjoining, a Chamber for disinfecting bedding was erected fourteen years ago, and fitted up with all the modern improvements by Messrs. Goddard and Massey. The disinfecting process is effected by gas, and is self-regulating. No damage has been done to clothing, &c., in consequence.

Disinfection is carried out by a man employed for the purpose, free of Charge to Residents within the Borough. The articles treated are taken to and from the Chamber in separate covered conveyances.

### SICKNESS FROM INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

The number, and nature of cases of Infectious Disease returned for the year, together with the Districts in which they took place, are shown in the following Table:—

|                  | St.<br>John. | St.<br>Mary. | St.<br>James | Rowde. | Work-<br>house. | Prison. | Total. |
|------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------|-----------------|---------|--------|
| Smallpox ..      | —            | —            | —            | —      | —               | 1       | 1      |
| Scarlet Fever .. | 6            | 5            | 7            | 2      | 2               | —       | 22     |
| Diphtheria ..    | 9            | 9            | 6            | 1      | 1               | —       | 26     |
| Measles ..       | 15           | 5            | 7            | —      | —               | —       | 27     |
| Erysipelas ..    | 2            | 8            | 5            | —      | —               | —       | 15     |
| Totals ..        | 32           | 27           | 25           | 3      | 3               | 1       | 91     |

The case of Small-pox was introduced into the town by a prisoner—vagrant—undergoing a short term of imprisonment, who was removed to the Workhouse, sick, but before the rash developed. He was isolated and no other case followed.

New cases of Scarlet Fever and Diphtheria were every now and again occurring during the year. In both these diseases it was difficult to discover the source of infection. In some instances, where fresh cases occurred about the same period, the patients had not been in communication, they were not known to have been in communication with persons who had been or were suffering from the diseases, they attended different schools, and the milk supply for the households was obtained from different sources. This being so, the conclusion arrived at was that some persons were abroad who were suffering from a mild form of the disease—in Diphtheria where the throat was possibly only slightly affected, or in the case of Scarlet Fever the throat or skin were not affected to the extent to attract attention.

Measles was introduced to the town from Bishop's Cannings, a neighbouring village, by scholars attending schools in the borough. This was very clearly the case, as the individuals who first suffered were two pupils from Cannings attending different schools, who were attacked several days before any other residents in the town suffered, Measles at the same time being prevalent in the village named.

Influenza has continually reappeared, but not in such a severe form as in former years.



No doubt can exist that several of the deaths recorded during the year as Pneumonia or Broncho-pneumonia had their origin in this epidemic disease.

|              | Scarlet<br>Fever. | Diph-<br>theria. | Measles. | Ery-<br>sipelas. | Small-<br>pox. | Total. |
|--------------|-------------------|------------------|----------|------------------|----------------|--------|
| January ..   | 6                 | 4                | 1        | —                | —              | 11     |
| February ..  | 6                 | 1                | —        | 2                | 1              | 10     |
| March ..     | 4                 | 1                | 1        | —                | —              | 6      |
| April ..     | 1                 | 1                | 1        | —                | —              | 3      |
| May ..       | 4                 | —                | —        | —                | —              | 4      |
| June ..      | —                 | 1                | —        | —                | —              | 1      |
| July ..      | 1                 | 1                | —        | 2                | —              | 4      |
| August ..    | —                 | 7                | —        | —                | —              | 7      |
| September .. | —                 | 6                | —        | 4                | —              | 10     |
| October ..   | —                 | 3                | —        | 4                | —              | 7      |
| November ..  | —                 | —                | —        | 2                | —              | 2      |
| December ..  | —                 | 1                | 24       | 1                | —              | 26     |
| Total ..     | 22                | 26               | 27       | 15               | 1              | 91     |

### ADVICE TENDERED TO THE SANITARY AUTHORITY.

I have advised alterations being carried out at the Fever Hospital with a view to providing four wards, in the place of the two existing at the present time, in order that patients of both sexes, suffering from two distinct diseases, could be admitted to the Hospital at the same time.

The Town Council have not yet seen their way to carry out this suggestion.



**SANITARY STAFF.**

An Inspector of Nuisances, who is also the Borough Surveyor, now gives the whole of his time to the duties connected with these two offices.

**HOSPITAL STAFF.**

This consists of the Matron, who is a nurse, one additional Nurse, and a Servant. The man who attends to the Disinfecting Chamber and the removal of Bedding, &c., also acts as messenger at the Hospital.

The Inspector of Nuisances attends at the Medical Office one fixed morning in each week, and at other times when necessary. His journal is inspected on these occasions, if necessary.

No Special Reports have been made during the year.

**BIRTHS.**

The number of Births registered during the year ending 31st Dec., 1893, was as under:—

| PARISHES.                            | <i>Legitimate.</i> |          | <i>Illegitimate.</i> |          | Total. |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------|----------|----------------------|----------|--------|
|                                      | Male.              | Females. | Male.                | Females. |        |
| St. John's ... ..                    | 38                 | 30       | —                    | —        | 68     |
| St. Mary's ... ..                    | 29                 | 23       | 2                    | 1        | 55     |
| St. James' ... ..                    | 23                 | 24       | —                    | —        | 47     |
| Rowde (within the<br>Borough) ... .. | 4                  | 3        | —                    | —        | 7      |
| Workhouse ... ..                     | —                  | 1        | 3                    | 7        | 11     |
| H.M. Prison ... ..                   | —                  | —        | —                    | 1        | 1      |
| Totals ... ..                        | 94                 | 81       | 5                    | 9        | 189    |

Of the 189 Births registered, 175 were legitimate and 14 illegitimate. The Birth-rate was 29·4 per 1,000 of the population. The illegitimate births were 7·3 per cent. of the total births. The percentage of deaths of Children under one year of age (17) compared with the births was 8·9.

The following Table shows the Birth-rate for the past ten years, together with the percentage of Deaths under one year of age, compared with the Birth-rate for the same period :—

|              |          | Birth-rate per<br>1000 of the<br>Population. |     | Deaths of<br>children under<br>1 year per cent.<br>of those born. |
|--------------|----------|----------------------------------------------|-----|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| For the Year | 1882 ... | 31·6                                         | ... | 8.0                                                               |
|              | 1883 ... | 28·5                                         | ... | 6·9                                                               |
|              | 1884 ... | 28·0                                         | ... | 6·7                                                               |
|              | 1885 ... | 30·3                                         | ... | 11·0                                                              |
|              | 1886 ... | 29·0                                         | ... | 8·0                                                               |
|              | 1887 ... | 29·3                                         | ... | 14·3                                                              |
|              | 1888 ... | 22·4                                         | ... | 7·5                                                               |
|              | 1889 ... | 31·0                                         | ... | 7·8                                                               |
|              | 1890 ... | 24·9                                         | ... | 11·4                                                              |
|              | 1891 ... | 25·0                                         | ... | 9·8                                                               |
|              | 1892 ... | 25·9                                         | ... | 5·9                                                               |

### THE CLASSIFICATION OF DEATH CAUSES.

The Causes of Death as they appear in Table A, at the end of this report, are systematically classified according to the re-

quirements of the Local Government Board, as to Diseases, Ages and Localities. The total number of deaths from all causes, in the various Parishes, and Institutions, is shown in the first column. In those which follow are shown the numbers of deaths occurring between certain ages, and from the various diseases.

During the year 127 Deaths were registered, 23 of these being of persons not belonging to the district. Deducting these, who were persons dying in public Institutions, or suffering from their fatal illnesses when brought into the town—the number remaining, viz., 104, shows a Death-rate equal to 16·1 per 1,000 of the population.

The Death-rates for the Ten preceding Years were :—

|      |     |                 |
|------|-----|-----------------|
| 1892 | ... | 17·1 per 1,000. |
| 1891 | ... | 18·2     „      |
| 1890 | ... | 15·3     „      |
| 1889 | ... | 12·4     „      |
| 1888 | ... | 12·4     „      |
| 1887 | ... | 15·9     „      |
| 1886 | ... | 15·1     „      |
| 1885 | ... | 17·0     „      |
| 1884 | ... | 12·0     „      |
| 1883 | ... | 14·5     „      |

### MORTALITY AT DIFFERENT AGES.

|        |                                |     |          |                 |
|--------|--------------------------------|-----|----------|-----------------|
| Deaths | under 1 year ...               | ... | ...      | 17              |
| „      | above 1 year and under 5 years | ... | 11       |                 |
| „      | 5                              | „   | 15 years | 5               |
| „      | 15                             | „   | 25       | 6               |
| „      | 25                             | „   | 65       | 38              |
| „      | 65                             | „   | 80       | 35              |
| „      | 80                             | „   | 90       | 10              |
| „      | 90                             | ... | ...      | 5               |
|        |                                |     |          | <hr/> 127 <hr/> |

The number of deaths under 1 year was 17, being 13·3 per cent. of the total deaths. Those between 1 and 5 years were 8·6 per cent. of the whole.

### THE CAUSES OF DEATH.

The deaths under one year of age and between one and five years of age were due to the following causes :—

|                                    | Diphtheria. | Whooping Cough. | Pneumonia. | Gastro-intestinal. | Malnutrition. | Convulsions. | Hydrocephalus. | Tubercular Meningitis. | Natural Causes. | Injury. | Premature Birth. |
|------------------------------------|-------------|-----------------|------------|--------------------|---------------|--------------|----------------|------------------------|-----------------|---------|------------------|
| Under 1 year ...                   | 1           | 1               | 7          | 2                  | 3             | 1            | 1              | —                      | —               | —       | 1                |
| Above 1 year and under 5 years ... | 1           | 1               | 2          | —                  | 1             | 2            | —              | 2                      | 1               | 1       | —                |



Zymotic Diseases caused 9 deaths, viz.:—

|                 |     |     |   |
|-----------------|-----|-----|---|
| Diphtheria      | ... | ... | 3 |
| Whooping Cough  | ... | ... | 2 |
| Diarrhœa        | ... | ... | 3 |
| Rheumatic Fever | ... | ... | 1 |
|                 |     |     | — |
|                 |     |     | 9 |

or a Death-rate equal to 1·4 per 1,000.

Constitutional Diseases :—

|          |     |     |   |
|----------|-----|-----|---|
| Phthisis | ... | ... | 8 |
|----------|-----|-----|---|

Diseases of the Organs of Respiration :—

|            |   |    |
|------------|---|----|
| Bronchitis | } | 23 |
| Pneumonia  |   |    |
| Pleurisy   |   |    |

Diseases of the Organs of Circulation :—

|                |     |     |    |
|----------------|-----|-----|----|
| Heart Diseases | ... | ... | 17 |
|----------------|-----|-----|----|

|          |     |     |   |
|----------|-----|-----|---|
| Injuries | ... | ... | 5 |
|----------|-----|-----|---|

|                    |     |     |    |
|--------------------|-----|-----|----|
| All other Diseases | ... | ... | 65 |
|--------------------|-----|-----|----|

### DISTRICT MORTALITY.

|                                              |      | Parish<br>of<br>St. John. | Parish of<br>St. Mary. | Parish of<br>St. James'. | Parish<br>of<br>Rowde. | Devizes<br>Hospital. | Fever<br>Hospital. | Work-<br>house. | Prison. | Total. |
|----------------------------------------------|------|---------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|-----------------|---------|--------|
| Population                                   | 1881 | 1940                      | 2605                   | 1779                     | 221                    | —                    | —                  | —               | —       | 6645   |
| „                                            | 1891 | 1866                      | 2392                   | 1850                     | 318                    | —                    | —                  | —               | —       | 6426   |
| Total deaths<br>for the<br>year ...          |      | 27                        | 46                     | 18                       | 4                      | 14                   | 1                  | 17              | —       | 127    |
| Deaths from<br>Z y m o t i c<br>Diseases ... |      | 2                         | 4                      | —                        | —                      | —                    | 1                  | 2               | —       | 9      |
| Births for<br>the year ...                   |      | 68                        | 55                     | 47                       | 7                      | —                    | —                  | 11              | 1       | 189    |



The following Table shows the number of Deaths that occurred from the chief Zymotic and other diseases during the past ten years, together with the death-rates for the same period, after deducting the deaths of persons not belonging to the Borough, and who were brought into the town suffering from their fatal illness :—

|                                                   | 1884.      | 1885. | 1886. | 1887. | 1888. | 1889. | 1890. | 1891. | 1892. | 1893. |
|---------------------------------------------------|------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Smallpox .. ..                                    | —          | 1     | —     | —     | —     | —     | —     | —     | —     | —     |
| Measles .. ..                                     | —          | 10    | 3     | —     | —     | 4     | —     | 29    | —     | —     |
| Scarlet Fever ..                                  | —          | —     | —     | —     | —     | —     | —     | 9     | 3     | —     |
| Diphtheria ..                                     | —          | —     | —     | 2     | —     | —     | 3     | —     | 2     | 3     |
| Croup .. ..                                       | 1          | —     | 1     | 4     | —     | —     | 1     | 3     | —     | —     |
| Whooping Cough ..                                 | 4          | —     | —     | —     | 2     | —     | 1     | —     | —     | 2     |
| Fever                                             | Enteric .. | 2     | —     | —     | 1     | 2     | —     | 1     | —     | —     |
|                                                   | Typhus ..  | —     | —     | —     | —     | —     | —     | —     | —     | —     |
|                                                   | Doubtful   | —     | —     | —     | —     | 1     | —     | —     | —     | —     |
| Diarrhœa and Dysentery.. }                        | —          | 2     | 2     | —     | —     | 1     | —     | 1     | —     | 3     |
| Deaths from the Chief Zymotic Diseases .. }       | 7          | 13    | 6     | 6     | 3     | 8     | 5     | 43    | 5     | 8     |
| Deaths from other causes.. .. }                   | 89         | 127   | 120   | 139   | 102   | 100   | 125   | 96    | 135   | 119   |
| Totals for each year                              | 96         | 140   | 126   | 145   | 105   | 108   | 130   | 139   | 140   | 127   |
| Death rate per 1000 from chief Zymotic Diseases } | 1.0        | 1.9   | 1.0   | 0.9   | 0.4   | 1.2   | 0.7   | 7.0   | 0.7   | 1.4   |
| Death rates from other causes .. }                | 11.5       | 15.8  | 14.1  | 15.0  | 12.0  | 11.2  | 14.6  | 11.2  | 16.4  | 14.7  |
| General death rate                                | 12.5       | 17.7  | 15.1  | 15.9  | 12.4  | 12.5  | 15.3  | 18.2  | 17.1  | 16.1  |

For the Meteorological Returns I am indebted to Dr. Bowes, Wilts County Asylum.

### METEOROLOGICAL RETURN.

Births, Deaths, and Mortality from Zymotic Diseases, &c., for each Month in 1893.

| Months.         | Thermometer.       |                    | Barometer | Rainfall. | Births. | Deaths. | Deaths from |                 |           |              |           |
|-----------------|--------------------|--------------------|-----------|-----------|---------|---------|-------------|-----------------|-----------|--------------|-----------|
|                 | Mean Maximum Temp. | Mean Minimum Temp. | Mean.     |           |         |         | Diphtheria. | Whooping Cough. | Diarrhæa. | Respiratory. | Phthisis. |
| January ...     | 38·6               | 30·2               | 29·87     | 2·14      | 9       | 9       | 1           |                 |           | 1            | 1         |
| February ...    | 45                 | 35·5               | 29·53     | 3·90      | 10      | 10      |             |                 |           | 1            |           |
| March ...       | 56·6               | 35·7               | 30·10     | ·38       | 9       | 12      |             |                 | 1         | 2            | 1         |
| April ...       | 67·7               | 38·8               | 30·08     | ·05       | 19      | 17      |             |                 |           | 1            |           |
| May ...         | 71·8               | 45·4               | 29·97     | ·96       | 21      | 13      |             |                 |           | 3            | 1         |
| June ...        | 76·1               | 50·7               | 29·95     | 2·24      | 17      | 6       |             |                 |           |              |           |
| July ...        | 75·4               | 52·9               | 29·85     | 4·72      | 22      | 10      |             | 1               | 1         |              | 1         |
| August ...      | 77·2               | 54·1               | 29·98     | 1·62      | 12      | 8       |             |                 |           | 2            |           |
| September ...   | 67·9               | 46·4               | 29·84     | 1·15      | 20      | 10      |             |                 |           | 3            |           |
| October ...     | 58·3               | 40·8               | 29·86     | 3·75      | 14      | 8       | 1           |                 |           | 2            | 1         |
| November ...    | 46·6               | 33·6               | 29·86     | 2·09      | 18      | 6       |             |                 |           | 1            |           |
| December ...    | 46·4               | 32·8               | 29·83     | 3·08      | 16      | 18      |             | 1               |           | 7            | 1         |
| Total Rainfall. |                    |                    |           | 26·08     |         |         |             |                 |           |              |           |

Maximum Temp. 93 degrees July 2nd.

Minimum, in shade, 11 degrees, January 4th.

„ on ground, 5 degrees, „

Maximum Barometer Reading 30·575 Dec. 30th.

Minimum „ „ 28·250 „ 20th.

Largest Rainfall One Day, 1·52, 11th July.

## **HOSPITAL FOR INFECTIOUS DISEASES.**

During the twelve months, 26 persons were received into the Hospital. One death occurred from diphtheria.

At the Disinfecting Chamber 550 articles, consisting of beds, blankets, and suits of clothes were disinfected.

The Appended Sheet shows the Receipts and Expenditure for the year.

*EXPENDITURE AND RECEIPTS FOR 1893.*

|                   |     |     |     |                      |                       |                            |     |                 |                 |
|-------------------|-----|-----|-----|----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|-----|-----------------|-----------------|
| Wages ...         | ... | ... | ... | 36 15 1              | 36 15 1               | Received from Patients ... | ... | 46 19           | 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ |
| Food ...          | ... | ... | ... | 68 3 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ |                       | Urban S.A....              | ... | 104 8           | 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ |
| Wine ..           | ... | ... | ... | 1 15 0               |                       |                            | ... |                 |                 |
| Coal and Coke ... | ... | ... | ... | 8 0 2                | 69 18 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ |                            |     |                 |                 |
| Gas ...           | ... | ... | ... | 20 5 0               |                       |                            |     |                 |                 |
| Rates ...         | ... | ... | ... | 19 11 $\frac{1}{2}$  | 28 5 2                |                            |     |                 |                 |
| Drugs ...         | ... | ... | ... | 6 15 8               | 19 11 $\frac{1}{2}$   |                            |     |                 |                 |
| Repairs ..        | ... | ... | ... | 1 10 4               | 6 15 8                |                            |     |                 |                 |
| Musical Box       | ... | ... | ... | 10 6                 | 1 10 4                |                            |     |                 |                 |
| Furniture         | ... | ... | ... | 5 9 10               |                       |                            |     |                 |                 |
| Garden ...        | ... | ... | ... | 11 5                 | 6 0 4                 |                            |     |                 |                 |
| Sundries          | ... | ... | ... | 11 10                | 11 5                  |                            |     |                 |                 |
|                   |     |     |     |                      | 11 10                 |                            |     |                 |                 |
|                   |     |     |     |                      | <u>£151 8 5</u>       |                            |     | <u>£151 8 5</u> |                 |

The above Statement does not include the Matron and Nurse's Salaries, which amount to £42.

## REPORT OF INSPECTOR OF NUISANCES.

He states he has periodically inspected the Town and that the drains and gullies have been periodically cleansed and kept in order, that the removal of ashpit refuse has been superintended and that the scavenging has been performed regularly. He has also regularly inspected the Dairies, Milkshops, Slaughter-houses, and Lodging-houses. Appended is the Summary of Work done by the Inspector.

Summary of Work done by the Sanitary Inspector, in the Urban Sanitary District of Devizes, during the year ending December 31st, 1893 :—

|                                |   | Results of Inspection, &c.                                    |
|--------------------------------|---|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 Complaints received ... ..   | 0 |                                                               |
| 2 Cottages inspected ... ..    | 6 | Found to be no overcrowding                                   |
| 3 Lodging-houses inspected ... | 1 | Eight times. Kept clean.                                      |
| 4 Slaughter-houses inspected   | 7 |                                                               |
| 5 Bake-houses inspected ...    | 8 |                                                               |
| 6 Dairies and Milk-shops in-   | 4 |                                                               |
| spected ... ..                 | 8 | Rooms and vessels clean.                                      |
| 7 Cowsheds inspected ... ..    | 5 |                                                               |
| 8 Workshops inspected ...      |   |                                                               |
| 9 Filthy houses cleaned, sec.  |   |                                                               |
| 46 Public Health Act, 1875     |   |                                                               |
| 10 Houses disinfected ... ..   | 0 |                                                               |
| 11 Overcrowding abated ...     | 0 |                                                               |
| 12 Houses placed in habitable  |   |                                                               |
| repair ... ..                  | 0 |                                                               |
| 13 Houses closed ... ..        | 1 | Found unfit for human habitation. Pulled down and re-erected. |



|                                                                                         |   | Results of Inspection, &c.                                                                               |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 14 Houses erected or re-built,<br>for which "Certificates"<br>were applied for ... ..   | 6 | All houses are connected with<br>sewers except some from<br>outside the drainage area of<br>the Borough. |
| 15 "Certificates" granted ...                                                           | 0 |                                                                                                          |
| 16 "Certificates" deferred ...                                                          | 0 |                                                                                                          |
| 17 Wells sunk or improved sup-<br>plies of water afforded ...                           | 0 |                                                                                                          |
| 18 Wells cleansed or repaired                                                           | 0 |                                                                                                          |
| 19 Wells closed ... ..                                                                  | 0 |                                                                                                          |
| 20 Defective pumps repaired or<br>new pumps erected to ex-<br>isting wells ... ..       | 0 |                                                                                                          |
| 21 Leaky taps repaired where<br>drawing from public mains                               | 0 |                                                                                                          |
| 22 Houses connected with<br>sewers ... ..                                               | 6 |                                                                                                          |
| 23 Houses connected with water<br>mains ... ..                                          | 0 |                                                                                                          |
| 24 Earth, pail, or improved<br>privies constructed or ex-<br>isting privies altered ... | 0 |                                                                                                          |
| 25 Privies and W.C.'s repaired ;<br>W.C.'s supplied with water                          | 0 |                                                                                                          |
| 26 Cisterns cleansed, repaired,<br>or covered ... ..                                    | 0 |                                                                                                          |
| 27 Animals improperly kept<br>removed ... ..                                            | 0 |                                                                                                          |
| 28 Samples of water taken for<br>Analysis ... ..                                        | 0 |                                                                                                          |
| 29 Samples of food or drink<br>taken for Analysis ...                                   | 0 |                                                                                                          |
| 30 Compensation paid for de-<br>struction of infected bed-<br>ding ... ..               | 0 |                                                                                                          |

|                                          |    | Results of Inspection, &c. |
|------------------------------------------|----|----------------------------|
| 31 Seizures of unsound meat, &c          | 0  |                            |
| 32 Nuisances reported or detected ... .. | 41 |                            |
| 33 Nuisances abated ... ..               | 41 |                            |
| 34 Notices served ... ..                 | 9  |                            |
| 35 Summonses taken out ... ..            | 0  |                            |
| 36 Convictions ... ..                    | 0  |                            |

(Signed) F. G. BILLINGHAM,  
Inspector of Nuisances.

Before concluding this Report I have to bring under the notice of the Town Council the observations made in his report, by Professor W. R. Smith, to the Wilts County Council. This gentleman's experienced services were obtained by the County Council to digest and formulate the reports of the various local Medical Officers of Health of the county. To do this in a satisfactory manner, I have had the general remarks made at the commencement of his report, together with his remarks on the Report from Devizes, reprinted, which I append.

I have the honour to be,

Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

E. NICOLLS CARLESS,

Medical Officer Health,

Devizes.

State Medicine Laboratory,  
King's College, London,  
*November 2nd, 1893.*

MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

I have given very careful consideration to the reports of the Medical Officers of Health of the various Urban and Rural Sanitary Districts within the Administrative County of Wilts, and, so far as possible, have made such extracts as appear to me to best indicate the work going on in the areas to which they refer.

I experience, however, the greatest difficulty in writing a summary which will enable me to clearly lay before you the facts connected with the sanitary condition of the County as a whole, for it is obviously impossible to deal with the reports of the various districts and collate them in a satisfactory manner, unless they are as far as possible somewhat uniform in character. As a matter of fact, the greatest diversity exists in these reports, and in the interests of your Council, I think it a matter of immediate necessity that steps should be taken to ensure uniformity in the reports of the Medical Officers of Health; and in Part V I have drafted a scheme which I would suggest should be sent to the Medical Officer of Health of each urban and rural sanitary district within the County, so that action can be taken by those officers in respect thereto in the preparation of their reports for the current year.

It has been found necessary to take steps in a similar direction in other counties, with the uniform result that the Medical Officers of Health of the county have shown themselves very desirous of carrying out the wishes of the council with which they are associated.

It is a matter of satisfaction to note that the Infectious Disease (Notification) Act has been adopted during the year in several additional districts, and it is to be hoped that shortly the whole of the sanitary authorities within the County will see the wisdom of giving effect to this important Statute; for it is quite impossible for any Medical Officer of Health to deal with infectious disease within his district, and to arrest its progress, unless he receives the earliest possible intimation of its presence; and the experience of the Metropolis, where the Act is compulsory, and of the provinces where the Act has been voluntarily adopted, is that, in the hands of a judicious Medical Officer of Health, it can be worked without the slightest friction



to anyone and to the manifest advantage of the inhabitants of the districts.

From the reports which I have had under consideration, I am enabled to gather that no general arrangements are made for the proper isolation and treatment of infectious cases, and I also find no mention made of the existence of any provision for the proper disinfection of bedding, clothing, &c. In both of these respects it would seem desirable that the fullest information should be obtained from the various local authorities ; for, obviously, the notification of infectious disease fails to be beneficial to its fullest extent unless prompt and effective means are at hand for preventing the spread of disease

The practice appears to have been pretty generally adopted of closing the elementary schools on the appearance of any infectious disease. This is a measure which I think should be rarely resorted to in urban districts, for in such, the children attending the school are drawn from a more or less limited area, and will on the closure of the school meet and play with each other in the streets, consequently the object in view is frustrated. The better plan in such cases would appear to be to systematically exclude from attendance at school all children coming from infected houses ; this is the course adopted in the Metropolis, the Medical Officer of Health of a district sending to the head teacher a copy of the notification certificate which he receives, in connection with any house where children are in attendance at the school.

In rural districts, where the children come to school from long distances, it would there appear to be desirable to close the school, as it affords the only meeting place for the children.

In the earlier part of the year Influenza was very prevalent in the county, and this will probably account for much of the mortality from pulmonary complaints in many districts.

The threatened invasion of the country by Cholera gave rise to much activity on the part of the sanitary authorities throughout the county.

I find no mention of the adoption by any sanitary authority of the Infectious Disease (Prevention) Act. This Statute is important, as it enables the sanitary authority to stop the supply of milk from an infected



dairy, and empowers the Medical Officer of Health to visit any farm when situated without his district, accompanied by a veterinary surgeon in the event of an examination of the animals being desirable, steps which are rendered absolutely necessary from the known connection of various diseases in cows with outbreaks of Scarlet Fever, &c.

I also find no reference in any of the reports to the Dairies, Cowsheds and Milkshops Order of 1885, as amended by the Dairies, Cowsheds and Milkshops Amending Order of 1886. It is important that this Order should be enforced by the local authorities, as it ensures all dairies and farms being placed in a satisfactory sanitary condition before registration by such authorities.

I note with anxiety, the frequent reference of the Medical Officers of Health to the fact of the pollution of the water supplies of their districts; and I would respectfully urge upon the Council the necessity for immediate enquiry into the water supply generally of the county; indeed, from a perusal of the reports, this subject strikes me as one of the greatest urgency, for there can be no doubt that a pure water supply to a district is of primary importance.

The provision for drainage in several districts appears also to call for attention, the pollution of the water supply in many cases being directly attributable to the defects existing in it.

The Sale of Food and Drugs Act is indifferently carried out in many parts of the County.

I append various tables dealing with the statistics of the County and its different sanitary districts.

The Registration County of Wiltshire has an area of 811,367 acres, of which 18,324 are urban and 793,043 rural, the Administrative County has an area of 880,248 acres; the administrative area includes 76,483 acres which are not in the registration area, and excludes 7,602 acres which are in the registration area.

Table I.—Shows the mortality from all causes at different ages in the urban sanitary districts, from which it can be gathered that the urban death-rate is 19·3 per thousand, estimated upon the population given in the census returns of 1891. The death-rate would probably

be less if the population had been estimated to the middle of 1892.

Table II.—Shows the mortality from all causes at different ages in the rural sanitary districts, from which, in like manner, it can be gathered that the rural death-rate is 17·9 per thousand, estimated upon the population given in the census returns of 1891.

This does not include the deaths occurring in those rural districts which are embraced in the unions not wholly within the County, as no return is given by the Medical Officers of Health for these parishes; the rural death-rate would therefore be higher than is stated, and does not consequently compare favourably with the urban death-rate of the County.

The rural birth-rate of districts wholly within the County is 24·4.

The remaining tables are obtained from the Registrar-General's returns; his figures for 1892 are unfortunately not yet published, but I think these tables will be useful as affording the Council reliable information upon which it will be possible for them to make such comparisons as they may desire.

I am, my Lords and Gentlemen,  
Your obedient Servant,

WILLIAM R. SMITH,

M.D., D.Sc., F.R.S.Ed.,

Professor of Forensic Medicine and Director of the  
Laboratories of State Medicine in  
King's College,

Medical Officer of Health and Public Analyst for  
Woolwich, &c.

To the Chairman and Members of  
the Wilts County Council.

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## DEVIZES.

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH—E. N. CARLESS, M.B.

*Area 917 Acres. Population 6,426. Birth-rate*  
*25·9 Death-rate 17·1.*

This report is printed, and is consequently prepared

in a more systematic manner. The birth-rate for the year is rather higher than in 1891, but is lower than in any previous year since 1881, if the years 1888 and 1890 be excepted.

I append a table which shows the death-rate is lower than in 1891, but bears unfavourable comparison with previous years since 1881, the year 1885 being excepted. It must also be remarked that in 1891 there were 43 deaths from zymotic causes, particularly Measles, from which there were 29 deaths. In 1892 there were only 5 deaths from zymotic diseases, 3 of these being from Scarlet Fever and 2 from Diphtheria.

The present death-rate cannot be regarded as satisfactory.

Sixty-six cases of infectious disease were notified; of these, 39 were Scarlet Fever, and it is most satisfactory to note that 37 of these cases were removed to hospital; 14 were cases of Diphtheria—these were all necessarily treated at home owing to the want of proper provision at the Hospital. Dr. Carless has brought this necessity under the notice of his authority, and there would appear to be a good prospect that this defect will soon be remedied.

The general inspection of the town has apparently been carried on energetically; all houses have been three times visited. The efficiency of the sewage works has been increased by an expenditure of £2,818, and steps have been taken to prevent the undue waste of water on account of defective fittings, the supply being on the constant system.









TABLE of POPULATION, BIRTHS, and of NEW CASES of INFECTIOUS DISEASES, coming to the knowledge of the MEDICAL OFFICER of HEALTH during the year 1893, IN THE URBAN SANITARY DISTRICT OF DEVIZES, classified according to DISEASES, AGES and LOCALITIES.

B.

| NAMES OF LOCALITIES adopted<br>for the purpose of these Statis-<br>tics; public institutions being<br>shown as separate localities.<br><br>(a)<br><br>PARISHES. | POPULATION AT<br>ALL AGES. |                                                       | Registered<br>Births.<br><br>(c) | Age<br>under 5<br>or<br>over 5.<br><br>(e) | NEW CASES OF SICKNESS IN EACH LOCALITY COMING TO THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE<br>MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH. |             |             |                      |         |                        |           |           |            |          |            |          | NUMBER OF SUCH CASES REMOVED FROM THEIR HOMES IN THE SEVERAL<br>LOCALITIES FOR TREATMENT IN ISOLATION HOSPITAL. |             |             |                      |         |                        |           |           |            |          |             |    |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|----------------------|---------|------------------------|-----------|-----------|------------|----------|------------|----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|----------------------|---------|------------------------|-----------|-----------|------------|----------|-------------|----|
|                                                                                                                                                                 | Census<br>1891.<br><br>(b) | Esti-<br>mated<br>to<br>middle<br>of 1893.<br><br>(c) |                                  |                                            | 1                                                                                                   | 2           | 3           | 4                    | 5       | 6                      | 7         | 8         | 9          | 10       | 11         | 12       | 1                                                                                                               | 2           | 3           | 4                    | 5       | 6                      | 7         | 8         | 9          | 10       | 11          | 12 |
|                                                                                                                                                                 |                            |                                                       |                                  |                                            | Smallpox.                                                                                           | Scarlatina. | Diphtheria. | Membranous<br>Croup. | FEVERS. |                        |           |           |            | Cholera. | Erysipelas | Measles. | Smallpox.                                                                                                       | Scarlatina. | Diphtheria. | Membranous<br>Croup. | FEVERS. |                        |           |           |            | Cholera. | Erysipelas. |    |
|                                                                                                                                                                 |                            |                                                       |                                  |                                            |                                                                                                     |             |             |                      | Typhus. | Enteric or<br>Typhoid. | Continued | Relapsing | Puerperal. |          |            |          |                                                                                                                 |             |             |                      | Typhus. | Enteric or<br>Typhoid. | Continued | Relapsing | Puerperal. |          |             |    |
| ST. JOHN'S .. .. .                                                                                                                                              | 1866                       |                                                       | 68                               | Under 5<br>5 upwds.                        |                                                                                                     | 4           | 8           |                      |         |                        |           |           |            | 4        | 8          |          | 4                                                                                                               | 5           |             |                      |         |                        |           |           |            |          |             |    |
| ST. MARY'S .. .. .                                                                                                                                              | 2392                       |                                                       | 55                               | Under 5<br>5 upwds.                        |                                                                                                     | 7           | 9           |                      |         |                        |           |           |            | 6        | 6          |          | 3                                                                                                               | 6           |             |                      |         |                        |           |           |            |          |             |    |
| ST. JAMES' (within the Borough)                                                                                                                                 | 1850                       |                                                       | 47                               | Under 5<br>5 upwds.                        |                                                                                                     | 9           | 7           |                      |         |                        |           |           |            | 5        | 12         |          | 5                                                                                                               |             |             |                      |         |                        |           |           |            |          |             |    |
| ROWDE .. .. .                                                                                                                                                   | 318                        |                                                       | 7                                | Under 5<br>5 upwds.                        |                                                                                                     | 3           |             |                      |         |                        |           |           |            |          |            |          |                                                                                                                 | 3           |             |                      |         |                        |           |           |            |          |             |    |
| WORKHOUSE .. .. .                                                                                                                                               |                            |                                                       | 11                               | Under 5<br>5 upwds.                        |                                                                                                     | 1           | 1           |                      |         |                        |           |           |            |          |            |          |                                                                                                                 |             |             |                      |         |                        |           |           |            |          |             |    |
| H.M. PRISON .. .. .                                                                                                                                             |                            |                                                       | 1                                | Under 5<br>5 upwds.                        | 1                                                                                                   |             |             |                      |         |                        |           |           |            |          |            | 1        |                                                                                                                 |             |             |                      |         |                        |           |           |            |          |             |    |
| TOTALS .. .. .                                                                                                                                                  | 6426                       |                                                       | 189                              | Under 5<br>5 upwds.                        | 1                                                                                                   | 24          | 25          |                      |         |                        |           |           |            | 15       | 26         | 1        | 2                                                                                                               | 14          |             |                      |         |                        |           |           |            |          |             |    |

State here whether " Notification of Infectious Disease " is compulsory in the District ? Yes.—Since when ? 1890.



